

**Virginia Unmanned Systems Commission
Policy, Regulation, and Culture Work Group Third Meeting**

March 29, 2016

Veracity Engineering

425 3rd Street SW, Suite 600

Washington, DC 20024

Members Present:

Vicki Cox, Chair of the Policy, Regulatory, and Culture Work Group, Veracity Engineering

Steve Weidner, National Air Traffic Controllers Association

Scott Strimple, Captain, United Airlines

David Hamrick, MITRE

Guests in attendance:

Dave Hinton, Executive Director, Unmanned System Commission, Office of the Secretary of Technology

Dr. Myra Blanco, Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI)

Public Members Present:

David Skiles, Vectre Corporation

Houman Homayoun, George Mason University

Loginn Kapitan, Unmanned Systems International Corporation

1:00 pm Call to Order By Victoria Cox

1:02 Welcome by Hai Tran, CEO Veracity Engineering

1:05 Approval of minutes of the 2nd work group meeting held January 27, 2016

Dave Hinton

A request was made for comments or corrections. None received. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Steve Weidner. The motion was seconded by Vicki Cox. Minutes approved by unanimous vote.

1:08 Presentation regarding VTTI work with automated vehicles by Dr. Myra Blanco, VTTI.

See slides posted at <https://vus.virginia.gov/ums-commission/past-meetings-materials/>

Dr. Blanco described the work and capabilities of the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute and their partnerships, the significant work being done with the automotive industry, and the impacts of policy and regulation on innovation in this field. There was discussion of the factors that might lead firms to test and then stay in Virginia and how the policies and regulations in other states are encouraging or discouraging business.

1:55

Work Group Discussion

The presentation was well received by the working group and generated much interest in the best ways for the state to further leverage the significant capabilities of VTTI and other in-state assets to the benefit of Virginia industry and citizens. Agreement was reached that the overarching goal for the Commonwealth should be to attract the kind of industry that would contribute to further growth in the state leading to a “Silicon Valley” type environment. All felt that such an environment furthers growth and prosperity across a broad spectrum of industry, community and academic activities.

The discussion then began to focus on what Virginia can do to become more like Silicon Valley. It was noted that regulations aimed at automated vehicles in other states (California, Nevada, Florida) have had a negative effect on innovation and growth. As Virginia is currently silent regarding such regulations we agreed that it should remain so in order to further needed testing and data collection. Any future regulations should be based on lessons learned during this phase and should be data driven.

We discussed the merits of additional support for research and development in vehicles and related areas that will further the realization of surface vehicle automation. The group generally felt that targeted funding by the state could advance not only research but business investment in the Commonwealth. It was further agreed that any state investment should focus beyond the present and immediate returns. The discussion then veered back to a subject much discussed in previous meetings – that of public acceptance of new technologies as a key to future success of unmanned systems.

The work group next approached the subject of barriers to achieving a “Silicon Valley” type success in the state. One area identified was the lack of ready transportation into and around the area. VTTI is many hours away from the nearest airport with regularly scheduled commercial flights. This is a serious drawback to encouraging permanent relocation to the state.

Vicki Cox summarized the possible recommendations coming out of the discussion as:

- 1) Do not legislate – Dave Hamrick suggested that we should further recommend that any future legislation be data driven.
- 2) Targeted investments
- 3) Include public acceptance in marketing efforts
- 4) Address the lack of transportation across the full extent of the Commonwealth. It was agreed that this should not be a recommendation but should be noted.

Discussion then moved on to the recommendations coming out of the 2nd Policy, Regulation, and Culture working group meeting:

- 1) That the VA UMS Commission and appropriate state agencies support the development of a state-wide capability to apply UAS to life-saving missions in a safe, effective and timely manner.
- 2) That the Commission support the establishment of a special committee to perform a comprehensive review of Virginia laws, regulations and policies in order to determine changes

DRAFT for Work Group Review and Approval

that will need to be implemented to allow for broad commercial use of UAS in the Commonwealth

- 3) Explore the potential of the above as Pathfinder Projects with the FAA

Dave Hamrick pointed out that it was highly unlikely that these would be adopted by the FAA as Pathfinder Projects. Steve Weidner and Scott Strimple, who are also very familiar with on-going Pathfinder activities agreed. There was unanimous agreement that item number 3 be discarded but that the other recommendations should be rewritten to more clearly include collaboration with the FAA.

Vicki Cox then updated the working group on the activities of the GWU graduate student project on Unmanned Aerial Systems. She advised then that the students are currently undertaking a survey, which will include UMS Commission members. The project will be completed in early May.

Vicki next asked Dave Hinton to discuss how the final report of the Commission will be compiled. The work to date of the Commission are being combined into a draft report. Inputs sources will include the interim report, work group outputs, and the outcomes of the recently held Education Summit. Dave will work with the work groups to derive and refine recommendations in their scope and fill gaps in the report. The recommendations of the Commission will be voted at the final Commission meeting on June 7 with a mid-May Commission meeting to be held if possible.

Actions from today's meeting were summarized:

- 1) Develop recommendations regarding legislative action – Dave Hamrick will draft per our discussions
- 2) Develop recommendations for targeted funding – Steve Weidner will draft per our discussions
- 3) Make a recommendation to the Marketing Work Group regarding the importance of positive public perception in all aspect of unmanned systems – Scott Strimple, a member of the Marketing WG will draft per discussion
- 4) Note the lack of access to transportation into and around Virginia – Vicki Cox will draft per discussion
- 5) Add collaboration with the FAA to the recommendations coming out of previous Working Group meeting – Vicki Cox will add

3:54: Public Comments

Public attendees had opportunity to comment during the meeting and offered no additional comments.

3:55: Adjourn

Attachment:

1. Agenda
2. Briefing charts - available at <https://vus.virginia.gov/ums-commission/past-meetings-materials/>

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Agenda

1:00 – Welcome and Opening Remarks

Victoria Cox, Work Group Chair and Chairman and Senior Technical Advisor, Veracity Engineering

1:05 – Review and Approval of Minutes from Second PRC Work Group Meeting

Mr. Dave Hinton, Executive Director to the Commission

1:10 - Automobile Automation Briefing and Group Discussion

Dr. Myra Blanco, Virginia Tech Transportation Institute

2:00 - Further Development of Recommendations from the PRC Working Group

Victoria Cox, Work Group Chair and Chairman and Senior Technical Advisor, Veracity Engineering

- That the VA UMS Commission and appropriate state agencies support the development of a state-wide capability to apply UAS to life-saving missions in a safe, effective and timely manner.
- That the Commission support the establishment of a special committee to perform a comprehensive review of Virginia laws, regulations and policies in order to determine changes that will need to be implemented to allow for broad commercial use of UAS in the Commonwealth
- Explore the potential of the above as Pathfinder Projects with the FAA

2:40 - Review of Recommendations from the George Washington University student project

Victoria Cox, Work Group Chair and Chairman and Senior Technical Advisor, Veracity Engineering

3:10 –General Policy Work Group Discussion

Victoria Cox, Work Group Chair and Chairman and Senior Technical Advisor, Veracity Engineering

3:30 - Public Comment

4:00– Work Group Meeting Adjourns